

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

The indication that claims 18, 20-21, and 24 would be allowable if amended into independent form is gratefully acknowledged.

Claims 15-28 remain in this application.

Claims 15, 21, 27, and 28 have been amended; the amendment does not introduce new matter.

New claims 29-31 further recite the invention; the new claims find support in the specification and the figures and do not introduce new matter.

The Official Action rejected claims 15-17, 19, 22, 25, 27 and 28 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Hutchings (US 1,153,621; hereinafter HUTCHINGS).

The Official Action rejected claims 15-17, 19, 22-23, and 25-28 as being anticipated by Jensen (US 3,394,950; hereinafter JENSEN).

The rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the reasons that follow.

As to the rejection over HUTCHINGS, it is respectfully submitted that HUTCHINGS does not teach means for retaining a pipe end in leaktight manner in the body comprising cam means interposed between the body and the retaining member to bring the retaining member from a release state in which it releases the

pipe end to a grip state in which it grips the pipe end when the retaining member is moved axially in the body from a first position to a second position, as required by claim 15 (emphasis added).

In contrast, HUTCHINGS discloses lugs 4 "adapted to be received in the groove 3 in the tube A, permitting the [gripping] members [5] to slide in the tube and the lugs retaining the members in their proper positions against turning," (page 1, lines 38-41). That is, HUTCHINGS' lugs 4 are structured to secure the gripping members 5 against turning, and the grooves 3 are structured to cooperate with the lugs 4 to prevent the gripping members 5 from falling out of tube member 1 (page 1, lines 34-45). There is no teaching, either in the specification or the drawing figures of HUTCHINGS, that the lugs 4 have structure to bring the gripping members into a mode of either grasping or releasing a pipe or workpiece.

On the contrary, HUTCHINGS clearly teaches that the gripping members 5 act on a workpiece as a result of force transferred by a beveled surface 2 of the tube 1. "As the strain is placed upon the clevis 16 the gripping members 5 will be drawn toward the end of the tube and the beveled surface of the tube will cause the gripping members to grasp the cable and consequently the greater the pulling strain upon the clevis, the tighter the members will grip the cable," (page 1, lines 76-82). HUTCHINGS makes no disclosure of either of the lugs 4 or the

grooves 3 having any affect on the gripping action of the gripping members 5.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that HUTCHINGS does not teach the cam means as recited by claim 15. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and claims depending therefrom are patentable over HUTCHINGS. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

As to the rejection over JENSEN, it is respectfully submitted that JENSEN does not teach a retaining member comprising two independent jaws, as required by claim 15. That is, the jaws are independent in that they are not required to be deformed when being moved toward each other or spaced apart from each other (see specification, page 3, lines 13-19), i.e. separate pieces without fixedly connecting material (page 9, lines 25-30).

In contrast, the jaws formed of segmental flanges and threaded surfaces 42 in JENSEN (column 2, lines 64-71; Figures 2 and 5) are connected as one body (body part 14 in Figures 1 and 3, and body part 70 in Figure 5). With horizontal movement of the sleeve member 12, segmental flanges on which the jaws 42 are mounted must flex in order to bring the jaws 42 into and out of engagement (column 3, lines 57-63; column 3, lines 71-75). Further, any horizontal movement with respect to the sleeve member 12 (column 3 line 55 to column 4 line 24) of one jaw is

necessarily dependent on the movement of another jaw due to their being attached together as part of the same body part 14,70.

Therefore, the jaws 42 in JENSEN are not independent as recited in claim 15. It is further respectfully submitted that JENSEN does not disclose an instantaneous coupling device in the meaning of the term as understood by one skilled in the art (specification page 1, lines 14-19).

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that JENSEN does not anticipate the retaining member as recited by claim 15. It is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and claims depending therefrom are patentable over JENSEN. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

New claims 30-31 are believed patentable for the same reasons as discussed above, and in that the combination of recited features are not disclosed by the prior art.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that applicants have fully responded to the January 28, 2008, Official Action and that the claims as presented are patentable. In view of this, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims, as presented, and their early passage to issue.

In order to expedite the prosecution of this case, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the attorney for applicants at the number set forth below if the Examiner is of the opinion that further discussion of this case would be helpful.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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